The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and encourages other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

# AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 30, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

VICTORY BUY UNITED STATES WAR BONDS AND STAMPS

Thru Payroll Savings

WHOLE NO. 1792 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1945 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 35, NO. 33

## LABOR POINTS WAY

*Chicago.—Two outstanding declarations issued by the executive council of the American Federation of Labor at its meeting here just before V-J day are considered of such paramount importance to the nation's workers that the full text is given below:*

### New Wage Policy Demanded

The National War Labor Board is now entering its final phase. When peace returns, there will no longer be any reason or justification for its continued existence. Wartime wage control by government will necessarily give way to free collective bargaining in peacetime. The American Federation of Labor hopes that happy event is not far distant.

But in the meantime the National War Labor Board has an immediate and imperative duty to perform. Our nation must be spared the shock of sudden transition from a wartime to a peacetime economy. Interim adjustments of the government's wage policy can and should be made right now in order to facilitate the reconversion process, to prevent serious impairment of living standards and to provide the high and steady flow of purchasing power without which postwar production cannot find a market.

The executive council calls upon the National War Labor Board to end without further delay the wage-freeze which is jeopardizing the well-being of the entire nation.

We propose the following program:

1—Adjustment of the Little Steel formula to bring basic wage rates back into equitable relationship with increased living costs. Wage rates are still at May, 1942, levels despite admitted and considerable inflation of the cost of living. The minimum adjustment in wage rates that would compensate the nation's workers for the loss of purchasing power that has resulted from higher prices is an additional 15 percent. Labor asks and demands that such an adjustment be made now for the further reason that loss of overtime and incentive bonuses together with downgrading have caused an alarming shrinkage in take-home pay.

2—Restoration of free collective bargaining to permit voluntary wage increases to go into effect without the requirement of approval by the NWLB whenever the employer certifies that such increase will not involve a substantial increase in the price of his product. Hitherto, the NWLB has held that such voluntary increases might have an indirect inflationary effect by inviting competitive bidding for labor, because of manpower shortages and by increasing consumer purchasing power when the supply of purchaseable civilian goods was scarce. These conditions are rapidly disappearing and the requirements are no longer valid. Due to cutbacks in war production and the slow pace of reconversion, the nation now faces unemployment rather than manpower shortages. Increasing production of civilian goods will soon end tight markets. Furthermore, the time is fast approaching when labor and management once more must assume their full responsibilities in a democracy instead of looking to government for their solutions. That is the way free enterprise can operate in normal times. It is therefore up to the National War Labor Board to set an example for all federal agencies by beginning to relinquish government controls over collective bargaining.

3—More flexible administration. The NWLB should ask the President to restore its original power to use its discretion in deciding upon cases instead of being bound by rigid rules. The board should have the power to grant adjustments in pay even beyond the limits of the Little Steel formula and even though increases will result whenever it finds that failure to do so would cause suffering and hardship.

Supplementing these changes, the executive council renews its appeal to Congress to adopt legislation increasing minimum wage rates immediately to 65 cents an hour and to 75 cents at the end of three years, so that the NWLB will be able to correct substandard wage conditions accordingly.

Since the adoption of this program requires executive action, the executive council directs the officers of the American Federation of Labor to present its views on wage policy to the President of the United States.

### "Must" Legislative Program

Congress has been remiss in its duty to the American people by its failure to act on vitally important legislation before taking a long summer recess.

The powerful and progressive speech made by Senate Majority Leader Barkley just before the Senate adjourned indicates that the leaders of Congress, at least, are acutely aware of the concern felt by millions of the lawmakers to deal with human needs during the postwar period.

The executive council of the American Federation of Labor hopes that the members of Congress will heed Senator Barkley's appeal to them to study important pending legislation during their vacation and be prepared to act without further delay when Congress reconvenes in October.

The executive council furthermore calls upon President Truman to exert his leadership in this critical situation and send a special message to the returning Congress urging immediate action on a well-rounded program of postwar and social justice legislation.

This "must" legislation should include the following bills, to which the executive council herewith gives its endorsement:

1—The Kilgore bill, embodying President Truman's recommendations for broadening the coverage of unemployment compensation and supplementing state benefits with federal funds to the extent that disemployed workers in each state may receive a total of 26 weeks' benefits in any year. Since a certain amount of unemployment during the reconversion period appears to be inevitable, this legislation is necessary to avoid widespread suffering and to maintain consumer purchasing power. Labor regards this bill as an emergency expedient, offering only the bare minimum of protection needed to keep unemployment down to the coming chronic. It is the least Congress can provide for a temporary period until the sounder and broader provisions contained in the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill can be considered and acted upon.

2—The bill sponsored by the members of the Senate Subcommittee on Labor which would lift minimum wage standards immediately to 65 cents an hour and provide for a 75 cents an hour floor on wages at the end of three years. Millions of American workers are still receiving shockingly substandard wages which do not permit them and their families to live in health and decency. Unless their standard of living is raised, American industry and agriculture will be unable to find a domestic market for their postwar products and economic recovery will be retarded.

3—Senator Wagner's new Postwar Housing Bill, which the executive council regards as the most important step to the prompt attainment of full employment after victory. This bill would provide for impetus for the construction of 1,250,000 dwelling units a year over the next ten years. It would provide jobs, directly and indirectly, for millions of American workers and galvanize scores of industries into full-scale production of materials needed for building and furnishing homes. It would also serve to meet the alarming shortage of new homes both in cities and in rural areas resulting from wartime discontinuance of construction. This bill is designed to help private industry and to keep the government out of the housing field except for certain slum and low-income housing projects which private construction interests are financially unable to undertake. There can be no serious objection to this measure.

4—The Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill, amending and broadening the nation's social security system and instituting a national program of health insurance. On Aug. 14 America will celebrate the tenth anniversary of the signing of the original Social Security Act. When that measure was first introduced, it encountered violent opposition. By now the fears of its opponents sought to engender have long been dispelled. Social security has brought immense and incontestable benefits to the American people. It has strengthened and fortified the American way of life. Millions of people want more social security, not less. We believe that both major political parties in this country would be wise to heed the yearning of the common people for protection by substantial increases and the liberalization on a broad basis and speed its enactment.

## SAY, LISTEN!

**For the rest of this year, the AFL presents each Saturday evening at 6:45 P.M., EWT, over the nation-wide network of the American Broadcasting Company a radio news-magazine, featuring the latest news at home and abroad and special reports by expert commentators on important labor problems. This program is listed in the radio columns of your newspaper as "Labor-U.S.A." Our own subtitle for the program is "The American Federationist of the Air." Don't miss these bright, newsy broadcasts! Listen every Saturday night!**

# The War Is Over!

# LET'S WIN THE PEACE!

### War Department Praises AFL Unions For "Work Miracle" on Atomic Bombs Which Forced Jap Surrender

Washington, D. C.—The mighty atomic bomb ended the war in short order. This was admitted by Emperor Hirohito in a radio talk to the Japanese people. His admission was a great tribute to the American Federation of Labor and eighteen of its building and metal trades unions which the War Department credited officially for its record-breaking achievements in getting the atomic bombs produced.

The War Department issued two news releases on the subject headed "Labor Plays Vital Role in Secret Bomb Project" and "Stimson and Patterson Acclaim Labor's Contribution in Developing Atomic Bomb."

The only labor unions mentioned in the releases were those affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.

Undersecretary of War Patterson officially congratulated the American Federation of Labor and its members who helped to make the atomic bomb project such a success.

He described how AFL unions had recruited skilled workers from every part of the country and shipped them to the project sites in Tennessee and Washington.

"In many instances," the War Department said in acknowledgment of the AFL's aid, "the trade union leaders broke down conditions of long standing so that the work might be completed on schedule."

AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany in a radio talk on the AFL's Labor-USA program, declared the AFL workers on the atomic bomb projects had performed "a miracle of hard work, without which the formulas and blueprints of the scientists could never have been transformed into bombs." This work, he said, was done on the largest scale in history, both in construction and production.

### AFL Takes Steps To Assist Veterans Get Fair Break When They Return

Chicago.—The American Federation of Labor adopted a 4-point program by which organized labor can aid war veterans—and at the same time called upon the government to halt further inductions into the armed forces and bring the boys in uniform back home from overseas promptly.

After careful consideration, the AFL Executive Council decided that the following steps by labor would help service men get the fair break they want and deserve:

1—All central labor councils affiliated with the American Federation of Labor are hereby instructed to set up special committees to aid veterans to obtain jobs.

2—All affiliated national and international unions are urged to seek agreements with employers providing for training and employment of veterans on a fair and equitable basis.

3—In order not to penalize veterans for the time they spent in the nation's service, it shall be the policy of the American Federation of Labor to grant them accumulated seniority, just as though they had remained continuously in their former jobs.

4—The American Federation of Labor will support legislation to accord veterans full opportunities for education and training, to assist them to buy homes or get started in business and to provide them with the highest practical standards of unemployment compensation.

"America will welcome the returning veterans with open arms and a deep sense of obligation. Labor produced the weapons of war. The boys who fought to return won the war with those weapons. They and we must win the peace together.

"The stalwart and self-reliant men who fought against the enemy want no special favors. All they ask and expect is an even break and the opportunity to make up for lost time. Labor is determined that they shall have it."

### AFL Executive Council Offers Nation New Ten-Point Program to Speed Reconversion And Postwar Recovery

Chicago.—Labor rallied the nation for an all-out effort to win the peace the moment the fighting ended.

In the midst of rejoicing over the official announcement of VJ-Day, the Executive Council issued a solemn warning that peace may bring misery to the American people within the next few months.

Pointing the way for action to speed rapid postwar recovery, the AFL leaders offered the following "must" program:

1. Speed up reconversion to the limit.

2. Give highest priority to expansion of peacetime production.

3. Increase wage rates to provide vitally necessary purchasing power and to prevent impairment of living standards.

4. Raise unemployment compensation in line with President Truman's emergency recommendations to Congress.

5. Lift minimum wage floor to 65 cents an hour immediately and to 75 cents within 3 years.

6. Restore free collective bargaining immediately, as the National War Labor Board prepares to go out of existence.

7. End wartime government controls over labor and industry promptly.

8. Halt further inductions into armed forces.

9. Bring service men and women now overseas home as quickly as possible.

10. Encourage the launching of a new housing program and all other measures which would reduce the danger of widespread unemployment.

AFL President William Green said:

"War contracts are being canceled all over the nation. Factories are shutting down. Unemployment is bound to become serious. Some government agencies estimate it may reach a total of 9,000,000 within a few months.

"The American Federation of Labor is fearful that unemployment may become even more serious than anyone anticipates and that it may extend longer than can be risked with safety to the nation.

"Our country is shockingly unprepared to meet the crisis.

"The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor wishes to emphasize the tremendous importance of swift and effective action. The government must reach new heights of leadership. Reconversion must be given the green light.

"There is evidence of delay and procrastination by government agencies in dealing with reconversion problems. A new spirit and a new policy must be invoked."

In a formal statement the Executive Council before adjourning its summer session, expressed labor's joy in victory and its fears as to the future. The statement concluded:

"Congress should move at once to provide for human needs during reconversion and to take such measures as will encourage and aid private industry to expand production and provide jobs for all within a reasonable period.

"For its own part, the American Federation of Labor believes that organized labor has an important contribution to make to the postwar recovery program.

"The advent of critical and troublesome industrial problems is certain to cause widespread unrest. Disturbances in industrial relations caused by the sudden impact of peace must not be allowed to get out of hand. America still has a vitally important job to do—to win the peace!"

Mr. Green announced that the Executive Council expected President Truman to issue a call for a postwar labor-industry conference for the purpose of maintaining stable labor relations and preventing strikes.

The Executive Council, he said, agreed that the American Federation of Labor would participate in such a conference when called.

It was recalled that the War Labor Board was set up as a result of the labor-industry conference called by President Roosevelt shortly after Pearl Harbor.

The purposes of the new conference will be to reach agreement on a setup to provide for the disposition of thousands of pending cases now awaiting decision by the WLB and the disposal of facilities by which new industrial problems can be settled under the Wage Stabilization Act of 1942, which does not expire until six months after the war.

Even more fundamentally important would be a decision by the conference to terminate the existence of the War Labor Board and restore free collective bargaining.

## Atom Bomb Ends War, Says Green; Sees Future Benefits To Humanity

Chicago.—Labor's views on the new atomic bomb were expressed by AFL President William Green in a nation-wide radio address over the American Broadcasting Company network. Mr. Green declared that the new discovery must not be used as a war weapon and that atomic power should be utilized in the future for the benefit of humanity, instead of destructive purposes. The text of his radio talk follows:

"American labor, which played a vital role in the successful development of the atomic bomb as an instrument of military destruction, is keenly interested in the plans of science for harnessing the power of the atom to peacetime industry after victory is won.

"Shocked as we are by the terrible and devastating effect of this new explosive, we cannot help thinking that it will eventually prove a great blessing to humanity.

"For nothing is better calculated to prevent war than a full and fair knowledge of the common people in every nation of the world that now warfare may mean annihilation. Fear of destruction in the years to come will be able to persuade his people to change that kind of retribution for aggression.

"The assurance of lasting peace will give science, labor and industry a glorious opportunity to put the mighty resources of the atom to work for the constructive benefit of mankind. The power to destroy can and must be transformed to the power to build.

"It requires the highest stretch of the imagination to visualize the tremendous economic revolution which the development of atomic power may accomplish in the future. The discovery of low electricity could be applied to improve the lives of human beings and lighten their labors may become insignificant in this new and epochal scientific achievement.

"One thing is certain—the use of atomic power must be controlled so as not to enrich and strengthen the few, but to bring its benefits equitably to the people.

"The seven million members of the American Federation of Labor will be glad to know that the War Department has extended official recognition and praise for their efforts in constructing the tremendous plants where the atomic bomb was being produced and in operating those plants. I received today the following telegram from Undersecretary of War Robert P. Patterson:

"Through you, I want to thank all the officers and members of your building and metal trades unions who helped build and man the plants in which our atomic bombs are made. You recruited skilled mechanics from thousands of miles away to work on these projects even though we could not tell you what they were making. Now you have the reward of knowing that their efforts are making an important contribution to final victory.'

"The American Federation of Labor is grateful for that message and it wishes to let the American people know that the nation's soldiers of production will continue to serve faithfully and unswervingly to win the war and to win the peace."

## Thanks From The Army

Chicago.—The War Department sent its official thanks to the American Federation of Labor for its help in making the secret atomic bomb project a success in the following telegram:

WILLIAM GREEN, PRESIDENT
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
DRAKE HOTEL, CHICAGO

THROUGH YOU I WANT TO THANK ALL THE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF YOUR BUILDING AND METAL TRADES UNIONS WHO HELPED BUILD AND MAN THE PLANTS IN WHICH OUR ATOMIC BOMBS ARE MADE. YOU RECRUITED SKILLED MECHANICS FROM THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY TO WORK ON THESE PROJECTS EVEN THOUGH WE COULD NOT TELL YOU WHAT THEY WERE MAKING. NOW YOU HAVE THE REWARD OF KNOWING THAT THEIR EFFORTS ARE MAKING AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO FINAL VICTORY.

ROBERT P. PATTERSON
UNDER SECRETARY OF WAR

## AFL Unions On Nation's Honor Roll

Washington, D. C.—The War Department placed 18 AFL organizations on the nation's honor roll for their great contributions to the successful development of the atomic bomb. The Army's listing of these unions follows:

Int'l Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders and Helpers.
Int'l Ass'n of Heat and Frost Insulators and Asbestos Workers.
Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' Int'l Union.
United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners.
Int'l Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.
Int'l Union of Elevator Constructors.
Int'l Union of Operating Engineers.
Int'l Ass'n of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Iron Workers.
Int'l Hod Carriers, Building and Common Laborers Union.
Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers' International Union.
Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers.
Operative Plasterers and Cement Finishers International Ass'n.
United Slate, Tile and Comp. R'f'rs, Damp & Waterproof Wkrs. Ass'n.
United Ass'n of Journeymen Plumbers and Steam Fitters.
Sheet Metal Workers' International Association.
Int'l Brotherhood Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen and Helpers.
Building Trades Department of the AFL.
International Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers.

## MEANY, DOHERTY TO GO TO BRITISH CONVENTION

Chicago.—The AFL Executive Council appointed Secretary-Treasurer George Meany and Vice President William C. Doherty to represent the federation as fraternal delegates at the convention of the British Trades Union Congress when opens in Blackpool, England, Sept. 10.

The council decided it would not be worth while to send an AFL representative to the meeting of the General Council of the International Federation of Trade Unions, scheduled to be held in London, because of reports that the IFTU plans to go out of existence.

## AFL Condemns B-B-H Bill In Entirety, Mobilizes Strong Campaign Against It

Chicago.—The AFL Executive Council launched an intensive campaign here for the defeat of the anti-labor Ball-Burton-Hatch bill in its entirety. The council declared there was nothing worth salvaging in the bill by the amendment process.

All local AFL groups were directed by the council to make personal calls upon their Congressmen and Senators during the congressional recess to acquaint them with labor's opposition to the measure. The council also directed that the AFL's national representatives appear at public hearings of congressional committees in the Fall to express their opposition in detail.

Text of the council's declaration on the subject follows:

"The executive council has determined to mobilize all the forces of the American Federation of Labor for the defeat of the Ball-Burton-Hatch bill.

"After considering carefully analysis of the provisions of this bill, presented by Joseph A. Padway, counsel for the federation, the executive council is of the unanimous opinion that the measure is thoroughly obnoxious, from its first section down to the last paragraph.

"Therefore, the executive council has decided that the policy of the American Federation of Labor will be to defeat the bill as a whole. No amendment will be offered. The objectionable features of this proposed legislation are so numerous and so closely interrelated that it would be impossible to remove them by amendments.

"In effect, the Ball-Burton-Hatch bill would destroy the fundamental freedoms of the nation's workers in the postwar period and prevent the progress of labor toward its goals of the future.

"The American Federation of Labor will organize its opposition to the bill on two fronts.

"In the first place, the American Federation of Labor's local representatives in every city and state of the nation will make personal calls upon their Congressmen and Senators during the congressional recess to let them know how strongly labor resents this measure.

"In the second place, national representatives of the American Federation of Labor will appear at public hearings before congressional committees in the Fall to present detailed labor's objections to the bill as a whole and to all of its provisions."